ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a register insertion network having a plurality of nodes, each node generates status messages including at least an identification of the node that generated the status message and a message age. These status messages are periodically transmitted by each node of the network and received at each node of the network. When received, the status messages are aged and retransmitted onto the network unless the receiving node was the source of the status message in which case it is removed from the network. Node statuses, determined from the status messages, are stored at each node and enable the determination of network size, structure or topology and status of the nodes to assist in monitoring and testing of the network.